
The Monroe Doctrine

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Source: *The Journal of Race Development*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Jan., 1914), pp. 370-373

Published by:

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/29738004>

Accessed: 27-07-2014 22:04 UTC

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THE MONROE DOCTRINE¹

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Shock at seeing the foundations of a life-time swept away by the preceding speakers, but willing to accept a change of attitude caused by change of conditions.

I. FEELING OF CONFIDENCE IN THE STATESMEN WHO HAVE GUIDED THE UNITED STATES

Among these who have laid down a distinct doctrine with regard to our relations with other American states are: Jefferson, Monroe, John Quincy Adams, Polk, Seward, Grant, Cleveland, Roosevelt and Wilson.

Tendency in the speaker's mind to believe in his countrymen, and in the uprightness and the sagacity of those whom they have put at their head.

Certain that they did not all mean the same thing by what most of them call the Monroe Doctrine, but they all recognized the need of a policy which did not coincide with the general policy of the country toward foreign nations.

All of them impelled to the declaration (of whatever nature) by the desire to secure peace.

Not one of them (except Polk) intended his form of the Monroe Doctrine to cover territorial aggressions upon his neighbors.

II. A SPECIAL KIND OF POLICY IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY BECAUSE THE CONDITIONS OF AMERICAN FOREIGN RELATIONS ARE DIFFERENT FROM THOSE OF RELATIONS WITH EUROPEAN POWERS

Satisfaction of the speaker on seeing his former students disagree with him.

¹Outline of Address at the Conference at Clark University.

Suppose an administration formed of the gentlemen present who have taken ground, either for or against what is commonly called the Monroe Doctrine:

President, Hollander; Secretary of State, Callahan; Secretary of the Navy, Admiral Chadwick; Attorney-General, Mr. Tucker; Ambassadors at large of Latin America, Professor Blakeslee, and Professor Bingham; Expert in Latin American Affairs, Minister Pezet—What policy would that administration adopt?

III. LIMITED INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES IN EUROPEAN NATIONS

Clearly the United States is not in the assembly of European powers, though they cannot escape several intimate connections with those policies.

1. Through the existence of European colonies (especially British) in America.
2. Through the immigration of Europeans and consequent questions of nationality and citizenship.
3. Through our footing in Asia, in close contact with settlements of European powers.

IV. ESPECIAL INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES IN AMERICAN QUESTIONS

1. Physical nearness and contiguity of Mexico and Cuba.
2. Infiltration of Americans into other American countries.
3. Immigration of other Americans (particularly Mexicans) into the United States.
4. Investment of American capital in American countries.
5. The Panama Canal as a great inter-American highway.

V. GREAT INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES IN ALL AMERICAN TERRITORIAL QUESTIONS

1. Advance into Louisiana, West Florida, Texas, New Mexico and California.

2. Possession of Alaska.
3. Canal as a territorial possession.
4. The Canal as an "extension of our coast line."

VI. SPECIAL INTEREST IN HOME GOVERNMENT OF AMERICAN NEIGHBORS

1. Transfer of the foci of insurrection across the border.
2. Loss of life and property of Americans from bad governments.
3. Difficulty of maintaining polite relations with irregular and despotic governments.
4. Excitement and irritation caused in the United States.

VII. SPECIAL MILITARY INTEREST IN AMERICAN CONDITIONS

1. West India Islands as bases of military and naval operations.
2. Northeastern and northwestern British possessions as bases.
3. Panama Canal as a military objective.

VIII. DESIRABILITY OF MAINTAINING PEACE IN AMERICA

1. By preventing wars between foreign nations and American powers.
2. By preventing internal wars between American nations.
3. By preventing internal insurrections within an American neighbor country.
4. By avoiding causes of war between the United States and our neighbors.

IX. DOCTRINE OF INFERIOR NATIONS

1. Such nations exist in various parts of the earth, i.e. Persia, the Balkan States, Turkey, Portugal.

2. Such states are members of the family of nations, but are in the position of minority stock-holders.

3. The policy of European nations is to supervise such powers.

X. UPON THE BASIS OF THESE UNDERLYING CONDITIONS WHAT IS THE NATURAL POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES—WHETHER YOU CALL IT THE MONROE DOCTRINE OR SOME OTHER DOCTRINE?

1. No conferences or congresses with foreign nations upon American affairs.

2. Recognition of special interest and special friendship for the American neighbors.

3. Acceptance of the Drago Doctrine, so that no power shall use military force for the collection of contract debts.

4. Recognition of the presumption of the international equality with the United States of those Latin American powers who shall have demonstrated their capacity to take care of themselves.

5. Recognition of Latin American governments which clearly are supported by the people of the country—but not of political adventurers as heads of the state.

6. Moral aid to all peoples who are trying to raise their civilization.

“If this be the Monroe Doctrine, make the most of it.”